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Farm Broadcasters Letter



United States Department of Agriculture Office of Public Affairs Radio-TV Division Washington D.C. 20250 (202) 720-4330

Letter No. 2532

Nov. 15, 1991

INFORMATION CONTACTS -- USDA's Economic Research Service, National Ag Statistics Service & the World Agricultural Outlook Board have just released a new **Information Contacts and Periodicals** booklet featuring many new telephone numbers for their subject-matter specialists. For a copy, **contact: Marci Hilt** (202) 720-6445.

A GOOD MORNING FOR U.S. CEREALS OVERSEAS -- U.S. breakfast cereals are finding a new audience in overseas markets, a development that bodes well for U.S. cereal manufacturers & exporters. Buoyed by rising incomes & populations, growing demand generated by Western tourists in major markets, declining trade barriers & changing tastes & preferences, U.S. exports of dried breakfast cereals reached a record \$85 million in fiscal year 1990 -- up fourfold since 1986. **Contact: Michael J. Dwyer** (202) 720-1295.

MALL GRASS SURVIVES DESERT STORM PARADE -- A four-acre test site of Zoysia & tall fescue grass on The Mall in Washington, D.C., which was worn and torn during the Operation Desert Storm Celebration in June, bounced back to golf-course green after four- to six-weeks of watering & fertilizer. An ordinary lawn that had an airplane, helicopters & a tank rolling over it, in addition to more than one million trodding feet, would have been rutted, scarred & brown. "I think most grasses would have been dead after the Operation Desert Storm celebration," says **Kevin Morris**, a USDA turf scientist. "If the Zoysia-fescue mixture can stand up to the wear and tear it faced on the Washington Mall, it can stand up to just about anything." **Contact: Kevin Morris** (301) 344-2125.

COTTON BOUNCES BACK -- The resurgence in the popularity of cotton apparel helped boost growers' receipts to a record \$5 billion in 1990, says **Robert Skinner**, a USDA economist. The 1991 U.S. crop is expected to be the largest in more than 50 years & USDA projects a favorable long-term outlook for this crop. In 1990, Americans used about 23 pounds of cotton per capita, compared with about 42 pounds of synthetic fibers, 3 pounds each of silk & flax & 1 pound of wool. "Consumers' preference for natural fibers has taken off since the mid-1980s," Skinner says, "and cotton has made a comeback." Denim jeans are one of the heaviest uses of cotton, he says. **Contact: Robert Skinner** (202) 219-0804.

CONTRARY TO POPULAR PERCEPTIONS, foreigners are not buying up all of America's farmland, says USDA attorney **Peter Debraal**. The amount of cropland, pasture & rangeland owned exclusively by foreigners is about 3 to 4 million acres. DeBraal analyzes reports submitted by foreigners to USDA under the Agricultural Foreign Investment Disclosure Act of 1978 & reports those findings each year. Data from these disclosures have been used to report the effects of such holdings on family farms & rural communities. **Contact: Peter DeBraal** (202) 219-0425.

THE NATIONAL AG LIBRARY recently received the archives of the American Agricultural Economics Association. **Wayne D. Rasmussen**, retired USDA chief historian, signed the agreement accepting the archives, which will be processed into the library's collection & made accessible both physically & bibliographically. **Contact: Alan Fusonie** (301) 344-3876.

COCOA PRODUCTION DOWN -- World cocoa bean production from the 1991-92 crop year is going to be down 4 percent from last year, USDA economists say. Low prices have discouraged new plantings. Unfavorable weather, together with poor economic & unstable political conditions in several of the countries that produce cocoa, also have contributed to lower production. The 1991-92 crop is expected to be 2.35 million tons. Global cocoa production peaked in 1988-89 at 2.47 million tons. **Contact: Rex Dull** (202) 720-2974.

HISTORICAL MEETING -- The annual meeting of the American Historical Association, which will be held in Chicago, December 27-30, includes a number of sessions relating to agricultural and rural history. For information, write to: American Historical Association, 400 A St., S.E., Washington, D.C. 20003.

DAIRY PRODUCTS -- During September, butter production was 84.7 million pounds, which is virtually unchanged from the previous month and 1 percent above a year ago. Total cheese output, excluding cottage cheese, was 3 percent below August, but 1 percent more than a year earlier. American type cheese production was 206 million pounds, 8 percent below August 1991 and 4 percent lower than a year earlier. **Contact: Daniel Buckner** (202) 720-4448.

AQUACULTURE PRODUCTION RISING -- Farm-raised fish & shellfish production in the U.S. was estimated at 860 million pounds in 1990. This means farm-raised fish & shellfish output has more than tripled over the last ten years. Fueling most of the growth has been an expansion in catfish production. Growth in newly commercialized species, such as hybrid striped bass, tilapia & sturgeon, will be aided by adoption of production & processing technologies already proven effective in the catfish & trout industries. **Contact: Dave Harvey** (202) 219-0888.

DID YOU KNOW? Until the 1950's, pork was Americans' meat of choice. By the mid-1950's, beef surpassed pork in per capita consumption. By the mid-1980's, poultry overtook pork, as health implications of fat intake were increasingly identified. Source: November 1991 **Agricultural Outlook**. **Contact: Phil Spinelli** (202) 219-0713.

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FROM OUR RADIO SERVICE

AGRICULTURE USA #1797 -- On this edition of Agriculture USA, Brenda Curtis talks with U.S. Trade Representative Carla Hills about the multilateral trade talks of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade and the negotiations for a North American Free Trade Agreement. (Weekly reel -- 13-1/2 minute documentary.)

CONSUMER TIME #1279 -- Ham for the holidays; the art of cheesemaking; pizza on the rise; changes in U.S. farm population; wild animal problems. (Weekly reel of 2-1/2 to 3 minute consumer features.)

AGRITAPE NEWS & FEATURES #1787 -- USDA News Highlights; the case of the chinese pig; resisting the russian wheat aphid; new accounting methods for cattle producers; changes in the farm supply store. (Weekly reel of news features.)

NEWS FEATURE FIVE #1446 -- Tissue culture trees; eat pasta, live longer; the high-fructose diet; passion fruit pop?; valuable weed. (Weekly reel of research feature stories.)

UPCOMING ON USDA RADIO NEWSLINE -- Tues., Nov. 26, crop/weather update; Wed., Nov. 27, ag prices; world tobacco sit.; Fri., Nov. 29, world dairy sit.; world sugar outlook; Mon., Dec. 2, horticultural exports. **(These are the USDA reports we know about in advance. Our Newslines carries many stories every day which are not listed in this lineup. Please don't let the lack of a story listing keep you from calling.)**

DIAL THE USDA RADIO NEWSLINES (202) 488-8358 or 8359.
Material changed at 5 p.m., EST, each working day.

FROM OUR TELEVISION NEWS SERVICE

November 14th, 16th & 18th, 1991

FEATURES -- Pat O'Leary reports on USDA's Farm Input Forecast; Lynn Wyvill reports on safe turkey preparation for the holiday season; John Snyder has a two-part look at community sponsored agriculture.

ACTUALITIES -- James Donald, USDA Outlook Board Chairman, with the latest estimates of world agriculture supply and demand; Ray Motha, USDA meteorologist, with a crop and weather update for U.S. agricultural areas.

UPCOMING FEATURES -- Lynn Wyvill reports on using weather data to fight plant diseases; Pat O'Leary reports on USDA's Agricultural Outlook Conference; DeBoria Janifer reports on changes in food labeling by USDA and FDA; Dave Carter has a five-part series on supermarkets.

EVERY OTHER WEEK -- **Agriculture Update**, five minutes of USDA farm program information in "news desk" format with B-roll.

Available on Satellite Galaxy 6, Transponder 12D (Channel 23), audio 6.2 or 6.8:
Thursdays from 7:30 - 7:45 p.m., EST, **Saturdays** from 10 - 10:45 a.m., EST, and **Mondays** from 8 - 8:45 a.m., EST.

OFFMIKE

ANNUAL KMA FARM SHOW...will be held Dec. 3-4 in Red Oak, Iowa, says **Randy Rasmussen** (KMA, Shenandoah). Featured speakers will be former Secretaries of Agriculture **John Block & Bob Bergland**.

MOVE...underway for **Cindy Zimmerman** (Southeast Agrinet, Ocala, Fla.). Her husband, **Chuck**, is in Houston, Texas, working in sales for the new satellite TV network Ag Net. Chuck joins **Mike Miller**, a producer at the network & former broadcast manager at National Cattlemen's Association. Cindy will move to Houston & join the network. The Zimmermans will maintain their business interests in Southeast Agrinet.

CONGRATULATIONS...to **Gary Truitt** (AgriAmerica Network, Indianapolis, Ind.) and wife **Kathleen** for their co-authored article on "The Changing Face of Farm Broadcast" published in the November/December issue of AGRI MARKETING magazine. They say broadcasting is responding to the forces changing farming.

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Radio-TV Division
U.S. Department of Agriculture
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INTERESTING TREND...is in a recent issue of "CONTACTS UPDATE." Fifteen radio stations have added agricultural subjects to the items reported in their newscasts. Fifteen TV stations and two cable companies have also added agribusiness & farming to programs.

LIVE CALL-IN SHOWS...on agricultural subjects are an important part of programming, says **Todd Gleason** (WILL, Urbana, Ill.). He says the station is heavy on market reporting, reflecting the diversity of agricultural interests in the region.

DAIRY JUDGING TEAM...from Rapid City, S.D., is part of the city's delegation attending the mid-November FFA annual convention in Kansas City. **Verne Sheppard** (KTOQ/KEVN-TV, Rapid City) covered the send-off. He says about 40 local students will be part of the state's 200 representatives.

VIC POWELL

Chief, Radio & TV Division